

BROWN DEFIES THE TOOTING TERRORS AS WYCOMBE CRACK

By "Argus"

Tooting and Mitcham 5;
Wycombe Wanderers 1

THIS scoreline hardly does justice to Tooting and Mitcham's superiority in the Surrey club's first-ever Isthmian League defeat of Wycombe Wanderers. The Tooting Terrors, harnessing that splendid surging power and craft which made them the F.A. Cup glamour-boys last season, crackled through the sprawling Wycombe defence like miniature express trains.

If the Wanderers' problem-child rearguard has been stretched tight on other occasions this season, it was guillotined on Saturday.

Paddy Hasty, the volatile crew-cut blond with the sailor's rolling gait, ripped three goals past Ken Brown and led John Fisher a crazy dance; ball juggling wingmen Grainger and Denzil Flanagan sped hot foot past the square-lying full backs.

Only goalkeeper Ken Brown—splendid springheeled Brown—stood between the Wanderers and their heaviest defeat for several seasons. For a top of the League game, this was a surprisingly one-sided affair.

Defying the scorching sunshine, Tooting played at an unbelievable speed. "Our boys must have been inoculated with greyhound's blood," said one happy Sandy Lane fan. So it seemed. Perhaps the heat had expanded the Wycombe defence. Certainly the nimble Tooting forwards seemed to have yards to spare when developing their moves.

TWO BITES

The points were virtually in Tooting's locker at half-time, when the Wanderers had slumped to three goals down. Although Paul Bates had two bites at the same penalty cherry to make the score 3-1, Tooting

steamed away to add two further goals and magnificently justify their top ranking position.

Wycombe's own lightweight forward line again looked transparently dependent upon one man's potential—the white hope being Dennis Atkins. It was only a question of time before the bold Dennis took over at centre forward from the willing but well-held Michael Rockell, but with centre-half Bennett a powerful pivot there was no real hope of blazing a goal trail through the middle.

If Bates had been at his best, the story might have been very different for the enthusiastic ginger-headed reserve Humphries looked as raw as a carrot when Paul struck goalwards in the first half. Alas, Bates, like his fellow forwards, was blotted out for most of the game.

GOOD 'UN

Tricky-at-times Gerald Free came up against a "real good 'un" in full back Edwards; Rockell showed plenty of dash but never a glimpse of shooting power, while Trott—temporarily at least—is not making his influence felt.

In the 18th minute Hasty sauntered on to the left wing, whipped across a centre and saw Flanagan accept a gift offering with an unstoppable shot.

The Wycombe forwards could not hope to match this magic but they pressed hard and two panic-corners revealed uncertainty in the Tooting defence. Atkins, with a trio of shots, was the most persistent Wanderer.

MAN OF MOMENT

But it was Brown, leaping, diving, twisting about his goal-mouth, who was the man of the moment. He made two great saves from little Alan Viney before Paddy Hasty blasted in goal number two after Roberts had headed the ball to his feet.

So hot was the Tooting pace that Ron Fryer deliberately cleared past his own goalpost in one crisis.

But it was not long before Tooting had a third success, two lightning quick passes across the Wycombe goal ending with Hasty calmly netting. Two more peak-form saves by Brown kept Wanderers just in the fight.

NO RELAPSE

There were no signs of a Tooting relapse after the interval. Indeed, the pace seemed as terrific as ever. A Paul Bates spot-kick goal made the score 3-1 to a chorus of boos. Paul missed with his first kick but referee Ruck decided that goalkeeper Wally Pearson had moved too soon and ordered a re-take. This time Bates made no mistake.

Tooting "went mad" for ten minutes and a magnificent goal by Grainger—he seemed to run through half the Wycombe defence to score—and a hat-trick goal from Hasty made the debacle complete.

Although Atkins spearheaded several lively Wycombe raids in the last quarter of an hour, with Tooting easing up at last, the exchanges were of purely academic interest. On this showing, Tooting must be clear favourites to wear the Isthmian crown at the end of the season.